

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PTQ9968

RELEASED IN FULL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 05070 00 OF 03 052109Z

ACTION H-01

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 INL-00 WHA-00 DS-00 UTED-00 TEDE-00

SS-00 STR-00 TEST-00 DSCC-00 SAS-00

(SAS) /000W

-----B952BA 061847Z /38

R 052105Z JUN 02
 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9015
 INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
 AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 AMEMBASSY LIMA
 AMEMBASSY MEXICO
 AMEMBASSY PANAMA
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
 JOINT STAFF WASHDC
 NSC WASHDC
 SECDEF WASHDC
 USCINCSO MIAMI FL
 DIRONDCP WASHDC

UNCLAS BOGOTA 005070

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
 TAGS: PTER, PGOV, SNAR, ENRG, CO
 SUBJECT: STAFFDEL CARDENAS

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 05070 00 OF 03 052109Z

SUMMARY

1. (SBU) ON MAY 27-31, SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE SENIOR PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER JOSE CARDENAS AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER BRIAN FOX VISITED COLOMBIA TO REVIEW PLAN COLOMBIA FUNDING. THEY MET WITH PRESIDENT-ELECT ALVARO URIBE, MILITARY AND POLICE OFFICIALS, AND COUNTRY TEAM MEMBERS. THEY ALSO TRAVELED TO GUAYMARAL AND SUBA TO VISIT THE COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE (CNP) OPERATIONS AND INTELLIGENCE CENTERS, TRES ESQUINAS AND LARANDIA TO REVIEW THE STATUS OF JOINT TASK FORCE SOUTH OPERATIONS AND

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: ALAN H FLANIGAN
 DATE/CASE ID: 22 FEB 2007 200503651

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

NAS-SPONSORED TRAINING AND ERADICATION PROGRAMS, AND ARAUCA,
SITE OF THE PROPOSED PIPELINE PROTECTION PROGRAM. END
SUMMARY.

URIBE DISCUSSES STRATEGIC PLAN

2. (SBU) THE STAFFDEL, ACCOMPANIED BY P/E COUNSELOR, MET
WITH PRESIDENT-ELECT ALVARO URIBE AND VICE-PRESIDENT-ELECT
FRANCISCO SANTOS. THE STAFFDEL DISCUSSED THE CURRENT CLIMATE
IN THE U.S. CONGRESS, NOTING PRESIDENT PASTRANA'S STRONG
HILL RELATIONS. URIBE SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE
OF PASTRANA'S GOOD RELATIONS WITH CONGRESS, IDEALLY BY HAVING
PASTRANA SERVE AS AN ELDER STATESMAN WITH KEY U.S. AND OTHER
FOREIGN AUDIENCES.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 05070 00 OF 03 052109Z

3. (SBU) URIBE DISCUSSED HIS STRATEGIC VISION TO ADDRESS
COLOMBIA'S SECURITY AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. URIBE STRESSED
THAT THE COLOMBIAN EXPERIENCE IS NOT A REPEAT OF THE CENTRAL
AMERICAN WARS, BUT, IF LEFT UNCHECKED, THE CONFLICT MIGHT
DESTABILIZE THE REGION. IN ORDER TO MARSHAL SUPPORT FOR HIS
INITIATIVES AND GAIN THE PUBLIC'S CONFIDENCE, URIBE SAID HE
WILL ATTEMPT TO MAKE IMMEDIATE GAINS IN IMPROVING SECURITY
CONDITIONS. HE THEN PLANS TO ASK THE COLOMBIAN PEOPLE TO BE
PATIENT, WHILE HE WORKS TOWARD LONG-TERM PEACE AND STABILITY,
WHICH HE BELIEVES WILL TAKE MUCH LONGER THAN HIS FOUR-YEAR
TERM. URIBE SAID HE WILL ALSO FOCUS ON MAINTAINING SUPPORT
AMONG COLOMBIANS FOR PLAN COLOMBIA, WHICH HE SAID IS CRITICAL
FOR ITS SUCCESS. HE PLEDGED THAT "WE WILL DO WHATEVER WE
HAVE TO DO TO DESTROY DRUGS IN THIS COUNTRY, THAT IS OUR
COMMITMENT." URIBE NOTED THAT RESTARTING THE AERIAL
INTERDICTION PROGRAM IS KEY TO DISRUPTING DRUG AND ARMS
FLOWS. URIBE SAID ADDITIONAL INTELLIGENCE SHARING BY THE USG
WITH THE MILITARY AND POLICE IS ESSENTIAL TO COMBAT THE DRUG
TRADE.

MILITARY REQUESTS MORE RESOURCES

4. (SBU) THE STAFFDEL, ACCOMPANIED BY OFFICE OF NATIONAL
DRUG CONTROL POLICY (ONDCP) DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR SUPPLY
REDUCTION BARRY CRANE, CALLED ON ARMED FORCES COMMANDER
GENERAL FERNANDO TAPIAS. TAPIAS SAID THE GREATEST CHALLENGE
FACING THE COLOMBIAN MILITARY (COLMIL) IS A LACK OF
RESOURCES. HE STRESSED THAT THE COLMIL'S EXISTING ASSETS ARE

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

STRETCHED TOO THIN AND OFTEN HAVE TO PERFORM POLICE DUTIES IN
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 05070 00 OF 03 052109Z

AREAS WITH LIMITED STATE PRESENCE. HE EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR THE COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE (CNP) AND OTHER GOC INSTITUTIONS TO RETURN TO MARGINAL AREAS TO PROMOTE PUBLIC ORDER, IN ORDER TO FREE UP THE ARMED FORCES TO PERFORM THEIR MISSION. HE ADDED THAT, ALTHOUGH INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION IS IMPROVING, THE COLMIL STILL LACKS ANALYSTS AND THE TECHNOLOGY TO PROCESS AND ACT ON INTELLIGENCE. TAPIAS ECHOED THE IMPORTANCE OF RESTARTING THE AIR BRIDGE INTERDICTION PROGRAM.

5. (SBU) TAPIAS ALSO DISCUSSED THE POSSIBLE IMPACT OF URBAN TERRORISM ON CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT URBAN TERRORISM MAY ERODE THE TRADITIONALLY HIGH APPROVAL RATING THE MILITARY RECEIVES, AS LOCAL RESIDENTS LOSE FAITH IN THE COLMIL'S ABILITY TO PROTECT THEM. IN RESPONSE, THE COLMIL IS DEVELOPING URBAN ANTITERRORIST UNITS, WHICH WILL WORK IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CNP. THE UNITS WILL HAVE SPECIALIZED TRAINING TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF LOCAL RESIDENTS. TAPIAS ADDED THAT HE BELIEVES AN INCREASING NUMBER OF COLOMBIANS UNDERSTAND THAT THE CONFLICT IS NOT FOR THE MILITARY TO SOLVE ALONE AND THAT A CONCERTED EFFORT BY THE COLOMBIAN PEOPLE AND PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES IS NEEDED.

POLICE ERADICATION EFFORTS MAKING HEADWAY

6. (SBU) THE STAFFDEL MET WITH NATIONAL POLICE DIRECTOR GENERAL LUIS ERNESTO GILIBERT, WHO SAID THE NAS-SPONSORED ERADICATION PROGRAM HAS BEEN PROCEEDING WELL. GILIBERT NOTED THAT THE CNP HAS WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE USG FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS, BEGINNING WITH MARIJUANA ERADICATION. HE SAID THAT
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 BOGOTA 05070 00 OF 03 052109Z

THE YEARS OF COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. HAVE PROVIDED A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR THE ERADICATION OF COCA AND OPIUM POPPY. GILIBERT MENTIONED THE DEBATE OVER CULTIVATION NUMBERS, SAYING THAT EARLIER ESTIMATES HAD BEEN FLAWED AND TOO LOW, AND AS ESTIMATES WERE ADJUSTED UPWARDS BASED ON BETTER DATA, CULTIVATION APPEARED TO BE INCREASINGLY RAPIDLY. GILIBERT ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE CNP'S NUMEROUS INTERDICTION SUCCESSES OVER THE YEARS, NOTING THAT OVER TEN PERCENT OF CNP MANPOWER HAS BEEN DEVOTED TO ANTINARCOTICS ACTIVITIES.

7. (SBU) CARDENAS ASKED ABOUT NEWS REPORTS ALLEGING THAT THE RECENT TRAGEDY IN BOJAYA (CHOCO DEPARTMENT) WAS CAUSED BY A

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

FIGHT OVER DRUG ROUTES. GILBERT EXPLAINED THAT DRUG TRANSPORT IN THE SURROUNDING AREA IS PRIMARILY CONDUCTED ON THE RIVER, WHICH HAS BEEN CONTESTED BY AND WAS LIKELY THE TARGET OF THE FARC AND THE PARAMILITARIES. HE NOTED THAT THE CNP HAS SUFFERED CONSIDERABLE LOSSES IN THE AREA, BUT IS PLANNING TO INCREASE ITS PRESENCE.

8. (SBU) FOLLOWING GILBERT'S COMMENTS, INTERIM ANTINARCOTICS DIRECTORATE (DIRAN) CHIEF GENERAL JORGE ENRIQUE LINARES BRIEFED THE STAFFDEL ON DIRAN OPERATIONS. HE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ERADICATION PROGRAM AND THE DIRAN AIR SERVICE. (NOTE: LINARES SAID THAT THE POLICE NEEDED TWO C-130'S TO SUPPORT DIRAN OPERATIONS. END NOTE.) LINARES ALSO DISCUSSED THE "CARIBINERO" PROGRAM, WHICH IS INTENDED TO REESTABLISH A POLICE PRESENCE THROUGHOUT COLOMBIA. THE CNP ALSO PROVIDED A BRIEFING ON ITS ANTI-KIDNAPPING UNIT (SPANISH ACRONYM GAULA).

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 BOGOTA 05070 00 OF 03 052109Z
POLICE HOSPITAL, OPERATIONS, AND INTELLIGENCE CENTERS

9. (SBU) AFTER THE CNP BRIEFINGS, THE STAFFDEL TOURED THE CNP HOSPITAL, VISITING WITH SEVERAL WOUNDED POLICEMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES AND EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR THEIR SACRIFICES. FOLLOWING THIS, THEY WENT TO THE CNP'S OPERATIONS CENTER IN GUAYMARAL (45 MINUTES NORTHWEST OF BOGOTA) AND WERE MET BY THE CNP'S AIR SERVICE DIRECTOR COLONEL JAIRO DELGADO. DELGADO BRIEFED THE STAFFDEL ON CNP AIR OPERATIONS AND ORGANIZATION. THE STAFFDEL AND DELGADO DISCUSSED AT LENGTH THE PROS AND CONS OF VARIOUS TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT, INCLUDING THE C-130, THE DC-3, AND THE BUFFALO. DELGADO MENTIONED THE BEST OPTION WOULD IDEALLY BE THE C-130. THE STAFFDEL THEN VISITED THE CNP'S INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORATE IN SUBA (30 MINUTES NORTHWEST OF BOGOTA), RECEIVING A BRIEFING FROM THE CNP'S INTELLIGENCE DIRECTOR GENERAL ALONSO ARANGO ON THE DIRECTORATE'S MISSION, TARGETS, AND CAPABILITIES.

TRES ESQUINAS & LARANDIA

10. (SBU) AT TRES ESQUINAS, JOINT TASK FORCE SOUTH COMMANDER GENERAL ROBERTO PIZARRO BRIEFED THE STAFFDEL ON THE CHALLENGES FACING THE GOC IN SOUTHERN COLOMBIA. PIZARRO HIGHLIGHTED THAT THE SOUTH CONTINUES TO BE THE HEART OF COCA

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

CULTIVATION IN COLOMBIA. HE ADDED THAT THE FARC, AND TO A LESSER EXTENT PARAMILITARIES, ARE INCREASINGLY PARTICIPATING IN THE DRUG TRADE. PIZARRO ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT THE

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 BOGOTA 05070 00 OF 03 052109Z
MONTH-LONG SHUTDOWN OF THE UH-1N PROGRAM, DUE TO HUMAN RIGHTS CERTIFICATION ISSUES, HAD A DEVASTATING EFFECT ON COUNTERNARCOTICS OPERATIONS. HE SAID THAT BESIDES SEVERELY LIMITING INTERDICTION OPERATIONS, THE SHUTDOWN KNOCKED OUT ONE OF THE KEY PILLARS OF GOC STRATEGY IN THE SOUTH -- FORCING THE ERADICATION OPERATION TO MOVE ELSEWHERE.

11. (SBU) THIS POINT WAS UNDERScoreD AT LARANDIA WHERE THE COUNTERNARCOTICS BRIGADE EXECUTIVE OFFICER EXPLAINED THAT, WHEN HELICOPTERS ARE GROUNDED, HIS UNIT IS LIMITED TO FOOT

PATROLS NEARBY THE BASE. NAS PERSONNEL BRIEFED THE STAFFDEL ON WHAT THEY WOULD HAVE SEEN AT LARANDIA, IF THE UH-1N OPERATIONS HAD NOT BEEN SUSPENDED. NAS ALSO DESCRIBED PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE AVIATION INFRASTRUCTURE AT LARANDIA. ALTHOUGH SPRAY OPERATIONS HAD MOVED TO TUMACO AND SAN JOSE DE GUAVIARE, THE STAFFDEL RECEIVED A BRIEFING ON SPRAYING AND INSPECTED THE HERBICIDE MIXING EQUIPMENT, MAINTENANCE FACILITIES, AND AN OV-10 SPRAY AIRCRAFT.

ARAUCA

12. (SBU) THE STAFFDEL ALSO VISITED ARAUCA DEPARTMENT (ALONG COLOMBIA'S NORTHEAST BORDER WITH VENEZUELA), THE AREA OF THE PROPOSED PIPELINE PROTECTION PROGRAM. THEY MET WITH LOCAL COLMIL 18TH BRIGADE (BDE) COMMANDER BRIGADIER GENERAL CARLOS OMAIRO LEMUS, WHO BRIEFED THEM ON SECURITY AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT. LEMUS SAID THAT EVEN THOUGH THE NUMBERS OF FARC, ELN, AND PARAMILITARIES HAVE NOT

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 08 BOGOTA 05070 00 OF 03 052109Z
DECREASED, PIPELINE ATTACKS HAVE FALLEN FROM 170 IN 2001 TO 21 THUS FAR IN 2002 (TOTALING 939 SINCE OPERATIONS BEGAN IN 1986). OXY GOVERNMENT RELATIONS MANAGER ANDRES SOTO TOLD ECONOFF THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO PINPOINT THE CAUSE OF THE REDUCTION IN ATTACKS; HOWEVER, INCREASED PATROLLING AROUND THE PIPELINE AND MORE AGGRESSIVE OPERATIONS BY THE COLMIL IN THE REGION, AS WELL AS THE PRESENCE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE FISCALIA-LED ANTITERRORISM UNIT, MAY BE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS.
(NOTE: THE PIPELINE ORIGINATES IN CANO LIMON IN NORTH-CENTRAL ARAUCA AND TRAVELS NORTHWEST 770 KILOMETERS TO

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

THE CARIBBEAN PORT OF COVENAS. END NOTE.)

13. (SBU) THE STAFFDEL ALSO RECEIVED A BRIEFING ON THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL'S (FISCALIA) ANTITERRORISM UNIT, WHICH HAS BEEN OPERATING THROUGHOUT ARAUCA DEPARTMENT FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS. LOCAL FISCAL LUZ ESTELLA AGUILAR EXPLAINED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE UNIT IS TO INVESTIGATE AND PROSECUTE ACTS OF TERRORISM, AS WELL AS MONEY-LAUNDERING AND DRUG TRAFFICKING THAT MAY SUPPORT TERRORIST ACTIVITIES, COMMITTED AGAINST THE PIPELINE AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES. SHE SAID THE UNIT IS COMPOSED OF THREE TEAMS OF TWELVE, WHICH ROTATE PERIODICALLY, AND IS BASED IN THE 18TH BDE'S HEADQUARTERS IN ARAUCA CITY. MEMBERS OF THE UNIT ARE RECRUITED ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS FROM THE FISCALIA, THE FISCALIA'S SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE UNIT (CUERPO TECNICO DE INVESTIGACION), THE ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT OF SECURITY (FBI-EQUIVALENT), THE CNP'S NATIONAL INVESTIGATIVE UNIT (DIJIN), AND THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE (PROCURADURIA). AGUILAR SAID THAT THE TEAMS, IN COORDINATION WITH LOCAL COLMIL UNITS, HAVE ALREADY CAPTURED 30 TERRORIST SUSPECTS. OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM HAS CONTRIBUTED ROUGHLY USD 700,000 IN HOUSING, FOOD AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES,

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 09 BOGOTA 05070 00 OF 03 052109Z
AND OPERATING COSTS TO SUPPORT THE TEAMS.

14. (SBU) AFTER OVERFLYING THE PIPELINE, THE STAFFDEL VISITED SARAVENA (WEST ARAUCA DEPARTMENT), WHICH IS THE SITE WHERE TRAINING MAY BE CONDUCTED AS PART OF THE ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION PROGRAM. COLMIL BASE COMMANDER LT. COL. FABRICIO CABRERA BRIEFED THE STAFFDEL ON SECURITY CONDITIONS IN THE AREA, FOCUSING ON IMPROVEMENTS IN HOUSING AND FORCE PROTECTION IN PREPARATION FOR THE ARRIVAL OF THE 5TH MOBILE BDE. CABRERA SAID THAT THE 5TH MOBILE BDE, WHICH HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE AT SARAVENA IN MAY, IS STILL ON OPERATIONS IN THE EX-DESPEJE THAT BEGAN IN LATE FEBRUARY. CABRERA NOTED THAT, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE COLMIL HAS STATIONED TWO PLATOONS (NEARLY 70 SOLDIERS) IN THE CITY OF SARAVENA, WHICH HAVE CONDUCTED FREQUENT PATROLS OF THE CITY AND SURROUNDING AREAS IN COORDINATION WITH THE LOCAL POLICE OVER THE PAST TWO MONTHS. CABRERA ADDED THAT SECURITY CONDITIONS AND CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED IN SARAVENA, AND THAT THERE HAS NOT BEEN A SUCCESSFUL ATTACK ON THE PIPELINE IN HIS AREA OF OPERATION (ALMOST 20 KILOMETERS) OVER THE PAST EIGHT MONTHS.

PATTERSON

UNCLASSIFIED

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

UNCLASSIFIED